



# PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

August 28, 2015

**WARD 2 COUNCIL OFFICE**  
**7575 E SPEEDWAY**  
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## PAUL'S NOTE

The National Park Service had its 99th birthday this week. President Woodrow Wilson signed the legislation organizing our national park system on August 25, 1916. At that time, there were 18 national parks, all but one in the western states.

In 1933, President Herbert Hoover signed legislation creating Saguaro National Monument. Since then, Saguaro has been elevated to National Park status. This gives Tucson a unique distinction: the largest city that abuts a national park. It's wonderful to have such a treasure a bike ride away, but it also gives Tuc-

sonans some unique responsibilities.

What the park brings us is tremendous. In 2013, there were 635,000 out-of-town visitors to Saguaro. They spent an estimated \$40.6 million dollars in local stores, restaurants and hotels, creating 563 local jobs.

The toughest thing to explain to folks outside of Tucson is how much life there is in our desert here. There is not a need to explain things; we just need to take them to Saguaro National Park and it will disabuse them of any notion that a desert is just sand dunes and cow skulls. The diversity of plant

life is astounding, and hundreds of species of birds, mammals and amphibians live in the park and the area around it as well.

Although the National Park Service does an amazing job preserving this treasure, much of that area around it that I mentioned is the responsibility of the city and county. For years, the park was relatively isolated, far from homes and the daily grind of urban and suburban life. The city has grown in that direction, and we need to be cognizant of what that means for the park.

## PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

Decades ago, both the city and county governments established a buffer zone that severely restricts development within a mile of the park's boundaries. In 1985, the city, along with area community leaders, drew up the Houghton East Neighborhood Plan, which calls for development to be done in the area from Houghton Road to the park's boundary to be done with regard to the sensitive nature of the area.

Any of us that have been to the area know that wildlife doesn't have much use for park boundaries, city limits or property lines. The chance to spot a bobcat or a javelina is a big part of why people choose to live in the area. The fact that they have this larger area to roam is the reason why the park's ecological diversity is maintained. Next time you take a trek up to Phoenix, you'll see that places like South Mountain and the Phoenix Mountain Preserve, both surrounded by higher intensity development, don't have the diversity of Saguaro National Park.

As I said, it's a treasure and the proximity to Tucson gives all of us as local leaders, especially my colleagues and I, an obligation to make sure it stays one of the most beautiful places in the country.

*If you can't get down to the park, you can always check out the wildlife on their webcam: <http://www.nps.gov/sagu/learn/photosmultimedia/webcams.htm>*

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## YOU'RE INVITED—STAKE HOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

The Tucson Parks and Recreation Department wants to know how it can improve recreation and leisure opportunities for all of its users.

This July the City of Tucson Parks and Recreation department kicked off a process of information gathering that will result in a five-year master plan that anticipates future needs and outlines the actions necessary to deliver high quality recreation facilities, programs and services to the Tucson area. Public and stakeholder input are essential and critical to the success of the master plan.

As a component of the planning process, a series of focus group meetings with community leaders and residents will be held to assess current and future needs. Because we value your opinion, we invite you to participate in one of these focus groups. The meetings will consist of approximately 10-20 participants and may last up to 60 minutes. The purpose of these meetings is to assess customer satisfaction, parks, recreation and open space needs of the community, and issues that should be addressed in the master plan. With a focus group, there are never wrong answers, so everybody is encouraged to participate and freely express their thoughts.

The focus group meetings will take place on September 9th, 10th and 17th. We have posted a complete list of them at the Ward 2 website: <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/ward-2/news/parks-and-recreation-stake-holder-focus-groups>

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## JENNIE FINCH SOFTBALL CAMP

Jennie Finch Softball Camp will take place at the Lincoln Park Softball Complex, 8116 E. Escalante Road, for all girls third grade and up. Camp will be held Oct. 24-25, 2015. Join Jennie Finch and her Olympic and professional softball teammates for two full days of personal instruction covering all aspects of softball. Come and learn from the best softball players in the world and discover what it takes to be a champion on and off the field.



Advanced registration is required and participation is limited. The cost is \$195 per camper or register 10 or more girls together to receive a 10 percent team discount. Campers will receive lunch both days, official camp t-shirt, autographed photo of Jennie Finch, certificate of participation, and a photo taken with Jennie and her medals. There will be a question and answer time for campers, coaches and parents, Finch Windmill demonstration, pitching demonstration by Jennie, hitting demonstrations by professional coaches, and drawings for prizes. Participants can register now at [www.JennieFinch.com](http://www.JennieFinch.com).

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## HOUGHTON ROAD UPDATE

**Broadway Intersection Park & Ride:** We are very happy to announce that the Park and Ride is now available to use. Sun Tran routes 8, 108 express, and 4 are now stopping at this facility. Details are available at [http://suntran.com/commuter\\_park.php](http://suntran.com/commuter_park.php). The bus driver offices/restrooms building has been installed, and we are wrapping up the final utility and security camera connections.

**Broadway Boulevard to 22nd Street:** Scheduled for completion September 20, 2016. No changes are anticipated to traffic impacts this week.

**Adjacent project:** Broadway Boulevard: Camino Seco to Houghton Roadway Improvements project has started the design phase. Keep an eye out for upcoming open houses sometime in August and November. We will keep you updated as we hear. This project was accelerated from its original schedule to bring the pavement upgrades to you as soon as possible and in the most efficient way. If you have any questions about this project you may contact Sam Credio at 520-837-6641.

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## PARKS PROGRAMS

**Carol West Senior Addition:** The Eastside Senior Club will host the "Smarter Than a 5th Grader Challenge" on Wednesday, August 26 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$2.00. There will be refreshments and prizes. The event will be sponsored by Handmaker, Jewish Services for the Aging. For additional questions, please contact the Carol West Senior Addition, 791-4121. Sign-ups for the activity are done at the front desk.

**Fall Swim Schedule:** The Fall swim schedule began August 6. The swim schedule can be viewed in the Fall Program Guide and Class Catalog or the online version of the program guide: [www.ezeereg.com](http://www.ezeereg.com). Contact the Aquatics Division at 791-4245/791-5352 for more information.

**Fall Leisure Classes:** Fall Leisure Classes run August 23 through November 28, 2015. The last day to register was Sunday, August 16. All classes and programs offered can be viewed on line at [www.EZEEreg](http://www.EZEEreg) or in the Fall Program Guide and Class Catalog. The Fall Program Guide and Class Catalog is available at all Parks and Recreation facilities.

Watch for the Spring 2016 Program Guide and Class Catalog to be available Monday, November 9, 2015. It will be available for free pick-up at all Parks and Recreation facilities. For questions or more information, contact the Registration Office at 791-4877.

**Tucson Pops:** The Tucson POPS concerts will be held at the Reid Park, DeMeester Outdoor Performance Center (OPC), 900 S. Randolph way, on Sunday, September 13, 20, and 27. Concerts start at 7:00 p.m.. There is a limited amount of seating and fills up quickly. A chair(s) or a blanket is recommended.

**Arizona Symponic Winds:** The WINDS Concert series will take place Saturdays, September 12, 19, 26 and October 3. The program will take place at the Lazslo Veres Amphitheater in Udall Park, 7200 E Tanque Verde Rd. Concerts begin at 7:00 p.m. Bring a chair or blanket.

**Facility Closures:** All Parks and Recreation facilities will be closed on September 7, 2015 for Labor Day.





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Tucsonaz.gov/  
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Remember to like  
Paul on Facebook!

Please bring these items to the Ward 2 Office  
for the following charities:

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perishable  
Items**

**DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—  
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers**

**TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals  
and Families in Need**

**LIONS CLUB—Eye Glasses**

**DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—Ballet/  
Dance Equipment**

**CASA MARIA—Plastic bags**

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## MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The next Mayor and Council meeting will not be on the regular Tuesday, but will instead be on Wednesday, September 9. Regular Session starts at 5:30 pm following an afternoon study session. There is always a short call to the audience before the business portion of the meeting. Council chambers are located downtown at 255 W Alameda.

The agendas for the meetings are posted online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>

